



MISSOURI FAMOUS *Missourians*



JOSEPHINE BAKER

(Born 1906; died 1975)

Born in the Mill Creek Bottom area of St. Louis, Baker's childhood resembled that of thousands of other black Americans who lived in poverty and dealt with white America's racist attitudes. In France, however, where racism was not as rampant, Baker became an international presence well known for her provocative productions. Her reputation, built on a 50-year career as a dancer, singer, and actress, allowed Baker to devote much of her life to fighting racial prejudice in the United States. She played an active role in the American civil rights movement of the 1950s and 60s.

Missouri State Archives



OMAR N. BRADLEY

(Born 1893; died 1981)

Bradley, born near Clark, commanded the largest American force ever united under one man's leadership. Known as "the G.I.'s general" during World War II, Bradley became the first Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff after the war. As a five-star general, Bradley served 69 years on active duty—longer than any other soldier in U.S. history.



Missouri State Archives

THOMAS HART BENTON

(Born 1782; died 1858)

Benton has been called the "most distinguished statesman accredited to Missouri." He was a fighter for the common man, which earned him the nickname "Old Bullion." A strong advocate of statehood, he was elected as one of the first United States senators from Missouri in 1820. He served five successive terms, playing a leading role in nearly every major national political issue from statehood through the slavery crisis of the 1850s. Benton emerged as Missouri's most prominent and powerful political leader during those early statehood years, becoming a nationally recognized advocate of Jacksonian Democracy.

State Historical Society of Missouri



GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER

(Born 1864; died 1943)

Born a slave near Diamond, Carver overcame tremendous obstacles to become one of America's greatest scientists. He is best remembered for his practical research, helping farmers make a better living from marginal soil. A national monument in southwest Missouri preserves the area where Carver was born and spent his childhood.



Missouri State Archives

THOMAS HART BENTON

(Born 1889; died 1975)

Born in Neosho, Benton (grand-nephew of Senator Thomas Hart Benton) was destined to become a renowned artist. Two of his best-known works appear in mural form at the State Capitol in Jefferson City and the Truman Library in Independence. The Capitol mural is a panorama of Missouri history; the Truman Library mural depicts Independence's role in the opening of the West.

State Historical Society of Missouri



CHRISTOPHER (KIT) CARSON

(Born 1809; died 1868)

Born in Kentucky, Kit Carson moved to the Boonslick district of Missouri in 1811, an area he called home for nearly half his life. He led an adventurous life as a Santa Fe Trail teamster, trapper, scout, and Indian fighter. Carson served as a guide for Lt. John Charles Fremont's western expeditions, and was active in the conquest of California in 1846 during the Mexican War. In 1853, Carson was appointed as Indian agent in charge of the Ute nation.



Missouri State Archives

GEORGE CALEB BINGHAM

(Born 1811; died 1879)

Considered by many to be the greatest American-born artist, Bingham is especially well-known for his portraits and his paintings of life on the Missouri frontier. He also had a long career of public service, including election to the Missouri legislature and service as state treasurer and adjutant general.

State Historical Society of Missouri



WILLIAM CLARK

(Born 1770; died 1838)

Clark is best known for his part in the famous expedition he and Meriwether Lewis led westward to the Pacific, returning with valuable information about the western region of the United States. In 1806, Clark began a long and successful Missouri career when he was appointed the principal U.S. Indian agent for tribes in the territory. From 1813 to 1820, he served as governor of Missouri. In 1822, he moved to St. Louis as U.S. Superintendent of Indian Affairs, a post he held until his death.



Missouri State Archives

SUSAN ELIZABETH BLOW

(Born 1843; died 1916)

Born in St. Louis, she is sometimes called the founder of the public kindergarten in America. Through her efforts, the first public kindergarten was begun in September 1873 at the Des Peres School at Carondelet, St. Louis. Thereafter, she trained teachers and published books on the subject.

Missouri State Archives



SAMUEL CLEMENS

(Born 1835; died 1910)

Growing up in Hannibal, Clemens watched riverboats on the Mississippi. From riverboat jargon he took a name—Mark Twain—that would become famous worldwide. One of America's greatest writers, Mark Twain is remembered today at his boyhood home in Hannibal and at his nearby birthplace in Florida, Missouri.



State Historical Society of Missouri

DANIEL BOONE

(Born 1734; died 1820)

Truly a legend in his own time, Boone was a pioneer, scout, Indian fighter and, in later years, a Missourian. He came to Missouri in 1799 and served as a local magistrate. From the home at Defiance which he built with his son, Nathan, he explored much of the state. He died in the Defiance home.

The Walt Disney Company



WALT DISNEY

(Born 1901; died 1966)

Disney, the well-known cartoonist and creator of animated films, grew up in Marceline and Kansas City. Disney created the first animated cartoon with sound, "Steamboat Willie," which introduced the world to Mickey Mouse. Disney's first animated feature film was "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs."



STE. ROSE PHILIPPINE DUCHESNE

(Born 1769; died 1852)

She came to St. Louis from her native France at age 48 to work as a missionary to the Indians. In 1818, she established a school at St. Charles which became the first free school west of the Mississippi. At the time of her death, she had established schools and seminaries for white, black and Indian children in Missouri, Kansas and Louisiana. She was canonized July 3, 1988.



EUGENE FIELD

(Born 1850; died 1895)

Field, born in St. Louis, created some of the world's best-loved children's poetry. His works included "Little Boy Blue" and Wymken, Blyken, and Nod." Known as "The Children's Poet," Field is memorialized by hundreds of schoolhouses across the country, named in his honor. He also was a newspaper writer and columnist.



EMMETT KELLY

(Born 1898; died 1979)

"America's most famous clown," was best known for his portrayal of "Weary Willie," the hobo character he invented during the years of the Great Depression. Born in Cabool, Kelly stumbled into the entertainment business after moving to Kansas City in 1917 to be a cartoonist. When this proved unsuccessful, Kelly toured with several circuses during the 1920s and 30s. Kelly joined the Ringling Brothers—Barnum and Bailey Circus in 1942, becoming a star attraction over his 15-year career with the circus.



JAMES CASH (J.C.) PENNEY

(Born 1875; died 1971)

Penney, founder and owner of the J.C. Penney Company, was born in Caldwell County. His success as a dry goods clerk impressed his employer, who sold him part interest in a store that Penney named the Golden Rule Store. He began purchasing more stores in 1904 and soon had a chain of stores. In 1912, these stores became the J.C. Penney Stores. While Penney did not invent the American chain store, he was a leader in exploiting the concept successfully.



PHOEBE APPERSON HEARST

(Born 1842; died 1919)

Born in Franklin County and married in Steelville, she moved to San Francisco with her husband George Hearst, also a Missourian, who amassed a fortune in the mining fields of Nevada. Although Mrs. Hearst was a patron of the arts, she is best remembered for her early financial support of kindergartens and as co-founder of the National Congress of Mothers, known today as the PTA. She is the mother of publisher William Randolph Hearst.



JOHN J. PERSHING

(Born 1860; died 1948)

Pershing, born near Laclede, is the only American to be named General of the Armies during his lifetime. His distinguished career included service in the Spanish-American War and in the campaign against Mexican bandit Pancho Villa. In World War I, he commanded the American Expeditionary Force in Europe.



EDWIN POWELL HUBBLE

(Born 1889; died 1953)

Born in Marshfield, Edwin Hubble became one of the world's leading astronomers. In 1925, he presented the first significant classification system for galaxies—a classification system that is still used by astronomers today. By 1929, he discovered what would later be called "Hubble's Law." This law states that radial velocities of receding galaxies are proportional to their distance, proving that the universe is constantly expanding. In 1990, the Hubble Space Telescope was launched in his honor.



JOSEPH PULITZER

(Born 1847; died 1911)

Pulitzer made his way from his birthplace in Mako, Hungary to St. Louis in 1865, a city he called home for nearly two decades. In 1878, Pulitzer purchased the bankrupt *St. Louis Dispatch* and merged it with the unprofitable *St. Louis Post*—a combination that produced the city's leading newspaper. His sensationalistic approach to covering news, dubbed "yellow journalism," was fully developed upon his move to New York, where he purchased the *New York World* and became known as a world-renowned publisher. The coveted Pulitzer Prize for journalists is named for him.



JAMES LANGSTON HUGHES

(Born 1902; died 1967)

James Langston Hughes, born in Joplin was an author, anthologist, librettist, songwriter, columnist, founder of theaters and jazz innovator. He used African heritage themes throughout his works. Hughes received many honors, among them the Anisfeld-Wolfe Award in 1953 for the year's best book on race relations, the Spingarn Medal in 1960 and election to the National Institution of Arts and Letters in 1961.



STUART SYMINGTON

(Born 1901; died 1988)

Though born in Massachusetts, Symington is best known for his years as Missouri's influential U.S. Senator, a position he held from 1953 to 1977. During the Truman presidency, Symington was appointed to several important positions, including Assistant Secretary of War for Air; he became the nation's first Secretary of the Air Force in 1947. As senator, he served on the Armed Services Committee and the Committee on Foreign Relations simultaneously. Symington twice sought the Democratic Party presidential nomination.



JESSE JAMES

(Born 1847; died 1882)

James, the notorious outlaw, was born at Kearney. His home and gravesite are there. The best-known site associated with Missouri's most infamous citizen is the St. Joseph home where he was shot and killed. The small frame home stands today on the grounds of the Patee House Museum in St. Joseph.



HARRY S. TRUMAN

(Born 1884; died 1972)

Truman, born in Lamar, served as 33rd president of the United States, from 1945 to 1952. His birthplace is now a state historic site. Truman is remembered as "the man from Independence." His boyhood homes, the summer White House, his first courtroom, the Truman Library and Museum, and his gravesite all are in this area.



SCOTT JOPLIN

(Born 1868; died 1917)

Joplin was born in Texas, but spent most of his life in Missouri. He was a pianist who helped develop the style of music which would become known as "ragtime." The son of a former slave, Joplin composed such well-known works as "The Maple Leaf Rag" and "The Entertainer."



LAURA INGALLS WILDER

(Born 1867; died 1957)

Wilder won fame as the author of *Little House on the Prairie* and seven other "Little House" books. Although born in Wisconsin, she was living at Mansfield when she began her writing career in 1932. All her books were written at Rocky Ridge Farm in Mansfield, where she lived until her death.